Reviewer’s report

Title: Prevalence, and health- and sociodemographic associations for visits to traditional and complementary medical providers in the seventh survey of the Tromsø Study

Version: 0 Date: 13 Feb 2019

Reviewer: Heather Boon

Reviewer's report:

Dear authors,

Thank you for the opportunity to review this paper. The paper provides evidence about an important question: are those who seek traditional medicine similar to those who seek complementary/alternative and integrative medicine? Below I provide some comments and suggestions that I hope the authors will find useful:

1. The background would benefit from definitions of traditional medicine as well as complementary and alternative medicine to clarify the distinction between the two. For example it is not clear if spiritual healing (discussed in line 102) is part of TM, CAM or in a separate category.

2. Methods - it is not clear if the questions used have been validated in any way.

3. Methods - in the ethnicity section (lines 210-216) there is a mixture of methods and results - please remove the results to the appropriate result section for clarity and consistency.

4. Discussion - the second paragraph of the discussion makes many assertions about the benefits of access to CAM/TM that appear either to be unreferenced or to be attributed to reference 34 which does not appear to be appropriate. Please clarify where this information comes from.

5. The discussion is very focused on Norwegian comparisons and implications which is appropriate given the study population. However, I wonder if the authors might be able to add more to the discussion about what non-Norwegians might learn from these findings to justify publication in an international journal?

6. Discussion - the finding by Larsen that patients' friends and families called TH when patients were hospitalized is interesting. Is there any regulatory difference between TH and CAM providers in Norway? i.e., would it be easier for TH or CAM practitioners to provide care in the hospital at the request of patients?

7. The paper would benefit from a close edit for English as I noticed a number of grammatical and typographical errors throughout the paper. For example (not an exhaustive list):
a. Abstract, method line 64 has two errors and should read "Data WERE collected THROUGH three self-administrated questionnaires……" (note: data is the plural form)

b. Background line 138 - remove the "s" so the sentence ends "suffering from bleeding after childbirth or operations."

c. Method line 162 - appears to be some words missing "were invited to participate (n=32,591) were of and n=21 083 accepted the invitation….."

d. Results line 277 - add the possessive so it reads "…This was also the case for the differences regarding the participants' financial situation.…"

e. Discussion line 304 - there seems to be a word or phrase missing in the sentence "The users of TH tended to be older, with a less economically strong ???

f. Discussion line 330 - "underline" requires an "s" so it reads, "This underlines, however that TH is used…."

g. Discussion line 350 - "occur: requires an "s" so it reads, "…when a health challenge occurs."

**Are the methods appropriate and well described?**
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

**Does the work include the necessary controls?**
If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

**Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?**
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.

Yes

**Are you able to assess any statistics in the manuscript or would you recommend an additional statistical review?**
If an additional statistical review is recommended, please specify what aspects require further assessment in your comments to the editors.

I am able to assess the statistics
**Quality of written English**

Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Needs some language corrections before being published

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